

Fast 50: These Orlando-area construction industry firms reported a rapid rise despite Covid

By Anjali Fluker – Associate Managing Editor, Orlando Business Journal

Construction was deemed an essential business during the pandemic — and many local companies in that sector proved their worth, landing among the area's fastest-growing companies in 2020.

A total of 19 commercial construction, general contracting, subcontracting companies as well as architecture and engineering firms notched spots on the 2020 Fast 50, the list of the Central Florida's fastest-growing privately held companies. This category, which did not include real estate developers or homebuilders together compiled roughly \$1.8 billion in 2019 revenue, based on Orlando Business Journal research. These companies also reported 2017-2019 revenue growth ranging from about 28.6% to 125.6%, OBJ research showed.

Granted, many faced the very real drawbacks of the coronavirus pandemic. However, expansion is part of the current and future plans for many of these firms.

Read below for more information submitted by some of the construction and related category companies on the 2020 Fast 50, in order of their ranking on the List. Note: Not all companies on the list responded to requests for information beyond what was provided for The List.

And you can read OBJ's Sept. 25, 2020, weekly edition for more on the region's largest privately held companies.

No. 37 Charlan Brock Architects

Maitland-based Charlan Brock Architects has designed more than 200,000 units that have been built totaling nearly 500 million square feet nationwide and abroad. The firm focuses on meeting the changing needs of the housing development industry through continuous innovation to create highly marketable, buildable and financially successful design solutions.

The firm's design process includes feasibility analysis and planning, site planning, design development, and documentation crucial to the municipal approval and permitting process. Once plans are in place, construction administration representatives are on hand to guide close relationships with outside consultants.

Here's more from founding principal Butch Charlan:



Butch Charlan,
Charlan Brock Architects

Key accomplishments in the past 12 months

Our company strategic planning was timely. We put an extra emphasis on company culture and employee cohesion, leadership development, and strategic planning. Then Covid-19 happened. One department that has grown through Covid is marketing; we dramatically enhanced our business development, and communications pace and capabilities. A few outstanding projects:

- Transit-oriented development: The Parker at Maitland Station
- Walkable master-planned community: LakeWalk at Hamlin
- Innovative student housing: Aero on 24th at University of Florida, Gainesville



Lakewalk at Hamlin

Most difficult challenges in the past 12 months

A year ago, we thought we were going to need to acquire more office space. Suddenly, we found ourselves in a completely unexpected scenario. We immediately transitioned to remote working. We focused on communications, both internal and external. Remote-work tools have allowed us to maintain work/life balance while increasing our efficiency and connectedness. Notwithstanding, we've grown by 20% in the past 12 months. We have implemented twice-weekly small-group meetings and twice-monthly companywide meetings to stay connected. We created a culture of recognition for outstanding performance, and we devote time to empowering our entire staff.

- 2019 revenue: \$17 million
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